

Rabbi Dresner's Dilemma: Torah v. Ethnos by E. Michael Jones

I never liked the title of Rabbi Dresner's book. It was called *Can Families Survive in Pagan America?* and was published in 1995 by Huntington House out of Lafayette, Louisiana. I got a copy just as I was starting *Culture Wars*, a magazine that ran concurrently with *Fidelity* and eventually superseded it. I liked Dresner's book because it fit in perfectly with the idea of *Culture Wars* at the time. Both the magazine and the book were meditations on the moral basis for America, which as anyone who is familiar with American history knows, is the only basis for America. Rabbi Dresner's take on the American experiment in ordered liberty was essentially the same as that of John Adams, Alexis de Tocqueville, and John Courtney Murray. We, John Adams wrote concerning the citizens of the nation he had been instrumental in bringing into being, have no constitution that functions in the absence of a moral people. According to Dresner's reading of the American experiment in ordered liberty:

The founding fathers of America, taking the biblical record as their model, knew that political democracy could only flourish if established on the dual foundations of faith and family. Our contemporary malaise is the consequence of abandoning that ideal in favor of a society that is largely secular, hedonistic and atomistic. Judaism, by advocating a God-centered family-based society, established by the covenant and governed by the Torah can play a key role in recalling America to its origins (*Families*, p. 77).

As a result of the decadence which has dominated American cultural life since the 60s, sexually degenerate America needed, in Dresner's view, a new coalition, a union of Jews and Gentiles with a common commitment to civilization and a common abhorrence of social and moral chaos.

Families was an American book, but it was different than the plethora of jeremiads about the moral decline of America in the Bill Bennett mode. Dresner's book was about something else. It had a subtext that escaped its title. *Families* was really about American Jews, or, better, the effect that America had had on the Jews who came here largely in the aftermath of the Russian pogroms of the 1880s. *Families* was about how many modern Jews, in their search for passion and pleasure and power, have lost themselves in the kingdom of Caesar. It was about the ironies which abounded when one compared the strictures of the Torah and the mores of contemporary American Jews. Is it not ironic, Dresner asked rhetorically, that the descendants of the those who wrote the Psalms and offered prayer to the world became, according to all accountings, the least worshipful?

Like *Culture Wars*, *Can Families Survive in Pagan America?* was a deliberate attempt to step outside the normal ethnic and religious boundaries; but like *Fidelity* magazine, which preceded and eventually morphed into *Culture Wars*, it could not do this without addressing the intra-ethnic situation, which is to say, in this instance the state of American Jews. In addition to being about morals, *Families* was about ethnicity and its antinomy, assimilation, and Rabbi Dresner was, by and large, not happy with the American Jewish experience. The Jews had prospered in America, but they paid a price for their prosperity. The chosen people seemed to flatten into normality, according to Dresner's pessimistic view, becoming what the prophets had warned against: like the nations. They had succeeded beyond their wildest dreams in assimilating and achieving success. They even succeeded in remaking American culture in the course of the 20th century in their image, but in doing that they also discovered that they were in some very real sense of the word, a sense which Dresner explored in detail, no longer Jews. Jews, according to Dresner, have tried all things. In the process they have exhausted modernity; and discovered to their chagrin; the puzzling truth that

No license has replaced the Law; no symphony, the Psalms, no chandelier, the Sabbath candles; no opera, Yom Kippur; not country club, the synagogue; no mansion, the home; no Jaguar, a child; no mistress, a wife; no banquet, the Passover seder; not towering metropolis, Jerusalem; no impulse, the joy of doing a mitzvah; no man, God. (p. 329).

Dresner carried the hope that American Jews would seek the recovery of the sacred to his grave when he died three years ago.

Samuel H. Dresner was born into an assimilationist-minded Jewish family in Chicago in 1923. He grew up in the Uptown section of Chicago and attended Senn high school where he lettered in track and gymnastics. In an obituary he wrote for *The National Jewish Post and Opinion*, Rabbi Elliott Gertel, who met Dresner as a boy at the congregation Dresner pastored in Springfield, Massachusetts in the 60s, described King Kong Dresner; as he was known in high school at the time, as obsessed with sports and girls.

Before long those obsessions were replaced by a loftier obsession. At the age of 15, Dresner became acutely and painfully aware of suffering in the world around him. He recounted being on North Sheridan Road at twilight during the late 1930s and suddenly having the sense that he was being pursued by some greater power. The more the track star ran away from that power, the more closely he felt he was being pursued. As a result of his vision, he turned down what would have been a lucrative career in his uncle's dress manufacturing business and decided to become a rabbi.

Dresner did not speak Yiddish. He was not a Polish Jew. His wife Ruth comes from a family of Orthodox German Jews. You would, however, not get this impression by reading *Families*, which is many ways one long invidious comparison between the Jews of America and the Jews of Eastern Europe, in general, and of Poland in particular. He got his attitude toward Ostjuden from Abraham Heschel. Dresner met Heschel as a student in the '40s while attending the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Dresner considered Heschel, who grew up in Warsaw, attended the Yiddish Real Gymnasium in Vilna, one of the great centers of Yiddishkayt, and the university in Frankfurt, 'the greatest Jew of his time.' Dresner wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Hasidim and would go on to become Abraham Heschel's closest disciple. He would go on to translate much of Heschel's writings on the Hasidim and eventually collaborated with Edward Kaplan of Brandeis University in writing the first volume of Heschel's biography.

Jewish Funerals

Dresner, according to Gertel, 'was the outstanding pulpit communicator of Jewish spirituality' and much of what he communicated caused consternation among American Jews. In the early '60s he was denounced as a Communist for criticizing overly elaborate Jewish funerals. According to Gertel, he also

provoked the ire of the founders of Brandeis University when he warned them that a college concocted by Jews to advance the banner of 'non-sectarianism' would not be able to deal with the identity conflicts of Jewish students or provide guidance to America in the face of challenges to traditional sexual mores. He was among the first to spot trends destructive of Judaism in literature, film and radical feminism.

To be honest with you, I still don't know how I met Sam Dresner. Pat Riley, who studied journalism at Columbia and later edited *The National Catholic Register*, knew him better than I did. Dresner, according to Riley, praised my writing and then upbraided Riley for not subscribing to *Culture Wars*. After I wrote the review of *Families*, it was obvious that we shared the same view of America as a nation that could only exist if it were based on moral consensus, even if we shared it from two very different ethnic perspectives. I remember asking him what he thought of a piece I did on Jewish/Catholic Kulturkampf, which ended with an analysis of Alan Dershowitz's *The Vanishing American Jew*. My point was that the Jews were putting themselves out of business by espousing sexual liberation. Dresner agreed with what I had to say, but added that Jews didn't like to hear others (i.e., the goyim) say it. It was an honest response, and I valued his honesty. In another conversation, he complained about me writing about 'Jewish villains' and so in response I sent him a copy of the then just released book *The Medjugorje Deception* with an inscription to the effect that there were no Jewish villains in it.

In another conversation, Dresner upbraided me for my attitude toward Leo Pfeffer. He was, according to Dresner's account, a pious Jew living on Long Island at the time. Maybe he was talking about another Leo Pfeffer than the one I had in mind. Or maybe Pfeffer had changed and decided to use his old age as an opportunity to repent for the sins of his youth and middle age. The Leo Pfeffer who came to Philadelphia in 1976 to give a lecture on the triumph of secular humanism was the antithesis of Sam Dresner. He was in my opinion a certifiable Jewish villain. In 1976, which is to say the same year that Pfeffer traveled to Philadelphia to gloat over 'the triumph of secular humanism' and the defeat of his Catholic opponents in the culture wars of the '60s, Dresner took a very different approach, attacking the same secularism that Pfeffer praised in an article which appeared in the Spring-Summer 1976 issue of *United Synagogue Review*. The thing which Dresner found 'most disturbing,' according to Gertel, was 'secularism,' the thing whose triumph Pfeffer praised. Pfeffer was an ardent opponent of the Legion of Decency and the Hollywood production code (as well as the architect of the legal strategies which drove prayer from the public schools and which deprived Catholic grade schools of government aid). Dresner complained about the evaporation of Christian faith and morals in American. Dresner felt that the fact that America was becoming more pagan was having an adverse effect on American Jews. Perhaps more than any other one person, Leo Pfeffer was responsible for that evaporation of faith and morals from the public square in America. Unlike Leo Pfeffer, who had good things to say about just about every aspect of cultural and moral subversion, Dresner saw the consequences that Jews like Pfeffer were creating and wondered 'what would happen throughout America if Jews would begin to say: I will not produce this film, or show this movie, or publish this book, or write this magazine article because it is perverse and destructive of human values. I will not sell this item because it is shoddy and will not last.'

Dresner felt that Jews were better off, spiritually at least, in the ghettos of Eastern Europe. Now that they had arrived in just about every sense of the word in America, he was afraid that they had become 'messengers who forget the message':

For centuries the Jews, shut up in their ghettos, perfected their souls before God and had something to say to mankind. But no one listened. Now, Jews have the ears of non-Jews on every level of society. What a tragedy if now that the gentiles are listening, the Jews have nothing to say.

When *Families* appeared, this gentile was listening, because he felt that this Jew had something to say. Not everyone felt that way about *Families*. His daughters wondered why he had written such a 'harsh and graphic and judgmental book? Why not write a nice and uplifting book, like the ones you used to write?' Their judgment is understandable. *Families* is harsh in its judgment of American Jews and their cultural heroes. Dresner singles out Isaac Bashevis Singer and Woody Allen for particular condemnation because of their contemptuous attitude toward things Jewish. In wondering why Singer is so popular among American Jews and why his portrayal of Polish Jews as sexual degenerates had evoked no protest, Dresner levels a jeremiad of biblical proportions against American Jews, a group which he feels,

have made a caricature out of Judaism, not only by the vulgarity and crass commercialism that pervades their communal life, but, more to the point, by too often abdicating the intellectual life of the faith of Israel to the fads of the time. The true creed of many American Jews, especially the intellectuals, has become whatever happens at the moment to be 'in' - Marxism, deconstruction, consciousness-raising, permissiveness, liberation, cults, sexual experimentation, etc. (pp. 190-1).

If 'the traditional family is under siege' in America, it is largely because of the influence of what Dresner calls 'the Hollywood crowd,' a group of people who praise 'rebellion, self-fulfillment, and promiscuity' and a 'debased view of the human body and spirit' which finds acceptance by 'none of the great religions of the world - and certainly not Judaism.' The Hollywood film, according to Dresner, has become a 'school from which one neither graduates nor needs to leave home to attend.' That school had a profound effect on American attitudes and behavior in the second half of the 20th century. According to Dresner, any study of the films which got produced from 1945 to 1985 would reveal 'a radical shift in values,' one which turned the world upside down. 'Hollywood came to adopt a permissive, value-free attitude in the course of a few decades,' and when it went down the drain, it dragged the rest of America with it. 'The underground has taken over. . . . the avant-garde has become the man on the street. Bohemia is Broadway. The filthy jokes formerly restricted to burlesque houses and certain nightclubs' are now available on 'films and TV for the millions. Las Vegas is no longer a city but a condition' (pp. 316-7). Hollywood, in short, got corrupted around 1945 and is now responsible for the moral decline of American culture.

Dresner's critique of Hollywood, however, is not as pointed as it needs to be. To say that 'the Hollywood elite' came to adopt 'a permissive, value-free attitude in the course of a few decades' from 1945 to 1985 is not only not true, it misses certain salient points. First of all, the Hollywood elite was then and is now overwhelmingly Jewish. Secondly, the Jews who ran Hollywood always had this 'permissive, value-free attitude' when it came to matters venereal. Beginning in the '20s, the outcry against Hollywood's subversion of morals was so great that various forms of legislation - federal, state and local - were proposed as an antidote. As a way of heading off this legislation, Hollywood's Jews in 1934 entered into a voluntary agreement with the Legion of Decency, a Catholic operation. That agreement was known as the Production Code. The Catholics forced the issue by organizing boycotts at a time when the film industry was reeling from the effects of the stock market crash and their heavy indebtedness to the nation's banks.

The most memorable and most effective boycott was organized by Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia, who forbade that city's Catholics from watching movies in the city's movie houses, which at the time were largely owned by Warner Brothers. His efforts created a situation in which Warner Brothers was losing \$175,000 a week at the height of the depression. At a meeting of Hollywood moguls called to discuss it, the Philadelphia boycott had reduced the normally pugnacious Harry Warner, to 'standing up at the top of the table, shedding tears the size of horse turds, and pleading for someone to get him off the hook. And well he should, for you could fire a cannon down the center aisle of any theater in Philadelphia, without danger of hitting anyone! And there was Barney Balaban (of Paramount Theaters), watching him in terror wondering if he was going to be next in Chicago.'

The man who described Harry Warner's plight at that meeting and the man who ran the Production Code office for the next 20 years was a Catholic by the name of Joseph I. Breen, a man who had no illusions about the attitudes of the Hollywood elite during the early '30s:

They are simply a rotten bunch of vile people with no respect for anything beyond the making of money. . . . Here [in Hollywood] we have Paganism rampant and in its most virulent form. Drunkenness and debauchery are commonplace. Sexual perversion is rampant, . . . any number of our directors and stars are perverts. . . . These Jews seem to think of nothing but moneymaking and sexual indulgence. The vilest kind of sin is a common indulgence hereabouts and the men and women who engage in this sort of business are the men and women who decide what the film fare of the nation is to be. They and they alone make the decision. Ninety-five percent of these folks are Jews of an Eastern European lineage. They are, probably, the scum of the earth (Black, Hollywood Censored, p. 70).

Virtually all the historians of Breen's tenure as head of the Production Code condemn Breen as an anti-Semite. Virtually all of the same historians can only bring themselves to use the word 'moral' in quotation marks, giving some indication that they have internalized the standards of the victors in this cultural conflict. The fact that Breen went on to work with 'these folks' for the next 20 years proves - to Mark Viera, at least - that Breen was not an anti-Semite:

Joe Breen, who had railed against the immorality of the Hollywood Jews, had learned from them, and they from him. They would not have asked him to run RKO Pictures if he had been truly anti-Semitic. They would not have flown him here and there. They would not have invited him into their homes. And they certainly would not have given him an Academy Award. He had convictions. He was a fighter, but he didn't hate.

What was true then is a fortiori true today. Jews dominate Hollywood and always have. The immigrant Jews who created Hollywood's major studios were followed by another generation of Jews who founded the nation's major TV networks - William Paley's CBS, David Sarnoff's NBC and Leonard Goldenson's ABC.

Today about two-thirds of leading TV and movie producers are Jewish. Four of the five companies that dominate American entertainment are run by Jews (Gerald Levin, who once considered a rabbinic career, runs Time Warner, Michael Eisner runs Disney, Mel Karmazin and Sumner Redstone run Viacom-CBS, and the Bronfmans run Universal).

This fact is rarely discussed in the mainstream media because Jews control that as well. When British journalist William Cash wrote about Jewish control of Hollywood in the October 1994 issue of the Spectator, Hollywood and its academic support troops reacted with rage verging on hysteria. In the

November 13, 1994 issue of Los Angeles Times, Neal Gabler attacked Cash's article as 'an anti-Semitic bleat from a reactionary crackpot' which could have been dismissed out of hand 'if it didn't have a respectable platform in the Spectator and didn't play to a pre-existing prejudice - that Jews control the U.S. media.' Neal Gabler, it should be noted, is the author of *An Empire of their Own: How Jews Created Hollywood*. Gabler, in other words was attacking Cash, for saying what Gabler had said in his own book. According to Cash,

That every major studio head is Jewish today is no different from 60 years ago. 'Of 85 names engaged in production, 53 are Jews,' a 1936 survey noted. And the Jewish advantage holds in prestige as well as numbers. In a recent *Premiere* magazine 'Special Power Issue' - ranking the 100 most powerful people in the 'Industry' - the top 12 were Jewish. There were no black or British industry executives ranked.

Jewish domination of Hollywood, however, cannot be limited to numbers. The numbers simply give a pale approximation of the extent to which Jews determine the cultural matrix out of which the nation's films get made. Cash cites an instance of the 'extreme measures' non-Jews engage in to succeed in Hollywood:

Bill Stadiem, a former Harvard educated Wall Street lawyer who is now a screenwriter in LA, told me that he recently came across an old WASP friend in an LA restaurant who had been president of the Porcellian at Harvard - the most exclusive undergraduate dining-club. His friend - a would-be producer - was dressed in a black nylon tracksuit and had gold chains on his wrist; dangling around his neck was a chunky Star of David. Stadiem asked: 'Why the hell are you dressed like that?' The WASP replied: 'I'm trying to look Jewish.'

One need only think back to Jay Gatsby's attempts to pass as a WASP in F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel, *The Great Gatsby*, to see how the cultural equation changed over the course of the 20th century. As media and entertainment came to dominate the political and cultural landscape, the Jew eventually succeeded the WASP as the country's culturally dominant ethnic group, the group which set the styles for the rest of the nation.

But here as elsewhere the term Jew has to be defined. 'Jews in Hollywood,' according to one commentator 'like most Jews in the media, academia and pornography, tend to be radical and alienated Jews, rooted neither in Judaism nor in the majority Christian culture. They tend to be rootless and politically left of center, seeking to create a rootless cosmopolitan society to reflect their own non-Judaic traditionless values.' They don't cease being Jews because of that fact, however, nor do they cease to act like Jews, as Cash's article makes clear. Cash describes then 81-year-old Lew Wasserman as at the top of Hollywood's 'feudal power structure.' When Stephen Spielberg, David Geffen and Jeffrey Katzenberg decided to form their own production studio, they first gathered at Wasserman's estate to gain his 'rabbinical blessing,' after which 'they spoke in 'hushed, reverential tones about the industry potentate,' and how he 'spun stories about the history of Hollywood and showed them artifacts.'

Wasserman had been Stephen Spielberg's mentor for over almost 30 years. Jews, according to Cash, govern the New Establishment, but they govern it like rootless and alienated Jews, which is to say, according to no Torah but the one of their own making. That means the application of traditional Jewish prejudice against majority culture with none of the restraint imposed by rabbinical interpretation of moral norms. That means, in short, moral subversion of the sort which Hollywood promulgated during the cultural revolution of the '60s, complicated by the fact that anyone who objects or even describes the situation, as the reaction to Cash's article showed, gets demonized as an anti-Semite.

'Few in Hollywood (can) recall such an anti-Semitic article in a mainstream publication,' wrote Bernard Weinraub, the New York Times' Hollywood correspondent in response to Cash's article. Hollywood in general concurred, filling the letters columns of local papers with one horrified reaction after another. One letter to the editor, whose list of prominent signatories included Kevin Costner, Sidney Poitier, and Tom Cruise worried that a new Holocaust and Spanish Inquisition could not be far behind.

The Battle over the Sexualization of America

William Cash's and Joe Breen's candor about Hollywood fills in what Sam Dresner's account leaves out. It shows that the battle over the sexualization of American culture was largely if not exclusively a battle between America's Jews and Catholics. From 1934 to 1965, Hollywood's Jews were forced to repress their 'permissive, value-free attitude' in matters sexual, or at least they were prevented from expressing that attitude in the films that they made. The golden age of Hollywood which Dresner indirectly praises was a collaborative effort; it was Catholics saving Hollywood's Jews from their own worst instincts. The Catholics eventually lost that battle, with dire consequences for the entire nation. Indeed, Rabbi Dresner's book is one of those consequences. His book is also an indication that the history of American Culture in the 20th century is in many respects a history of the sexual degeneration of the American Jew. That means the decline of the Rabbi Dresner Jew and the Rise of the Woody Allen Jew in his place as an icon for the entire culture. The Catholics lost the culture wars because they internalized Woody Allen Jewish values on sexuality, just as much as they adopted WASP values on birth control.

That, of course, leads to a dilemma for Rabbi Dresner. If we're talking about Boston's Puritans as the first and foremost influence in America, America was founded by a group of Judaizers, who followed a distinctly Old Testament version of Christianity, making America one of the most 'Jewish' of all of the 'Christian' nations. The Enlightenment, which was the intellectual matrix out of which the United States grew, abstracted Jewish morals from their religious context and made them the basis for a multi-ethnic 'nation.' America's Jewish roots, in other words, go deep, but they also lead us to Rabbi Dresner's dilemma. On the one hand, adherence to the Torah's teaching on the family can save America from moral decline. On the other hand, the moral decline that Dresner complains about was in no small amount attributable to the cultural influence of American Jews, something he adverts to time and time

again in his book. 'Jews,' he tells us, 'have played a less than admirable role in the sexual revolution' (p. 155). 'Many liberal rabbis,' he continues, 'are in the forefront of the proabortion movement. In fact, surveys indicate that Jewish women are among the most likely of all groups to support 'abortion on demand' (p. 39). Dresner goes on to cite 'a recent Gallup poll and a suppressed B'nai B'rith survey,' which indicates that American Jews are more likely to be divorced and less likely to be married than the average American; that '91 percent of Jewish women agree that every woman who wants an abortion should be able to have one'; that '50 percent of Jewish women signaled a high degree of affinity for feminism compared to only 16 percent among non-Jewish women,' and that Jews favor homosexual rights more than the general population. Yet Dresner tells us that the Jewish religion says that 'homosexuality is a violation of the order of creation' and that the family is 'divinely ordained' by that same order of creation. As a result, Dresner tells us that Jews, if they want to participate in a family coalition, 'need to put their own house in order' not only because they have abandoned traditional values, like other Americans, but because they 'are more likely to live in urban areas in the forefront of social change.'

Dresner never wrote from a deracinated, anti-ethnic perspective. He was an American worried about moral decline, but he was also a Jew concerned about the state of American Jews. Part of the pathos of his book stems from the anguish he feels when viewing the moral decline of American Jews, something he sees as quintessentially anti-Jewish, because Jews, according to his view, either stand for the moral law, as introduced by Moses into human history, or they stand for nothing. The cultural prominence of Jews like Woody Allen was especially painful for Dresner because they had become cultural icons by promoting sexual deviance. They had also promoted many of the standard anti-Semitic stereotypes. 'For the Gentile,' Dresner writes, 'Allen's depiction of religious Jews as pious frauds, and worse, can only confirm ancient Christian canards of the Jew as hypocrite, devil, despoiler of morality, and corrupter of culture' (p. 238). Why, Dresner wonders giving voice to that anguish, should American Jews rush to accept Woody Allen's categorization of them as 'despoilers of morality'? It's a question which Dresner addresses but cannot answer. 'Why Jews want to demean themselves is a question that Hollywood 'theologians' have yet to address.' But the fact remains. The rootless Jews who dominate Hollywood and, as a result, American culture as a whole, have defined themselves as, in Dresner's words, 'despoilers of morality and corrupters of culture.'

Dresner is concerned that others have noticed the same thing. He cites a letter to the California Lawyer which claims that 'the progressive deterioration of morality can be directly attributable to the growing predominance of Jews in our national life.' Dresner is, of course, appalled, but his book is saying essentially the same thing. Is Rabbi Dresner, then, an anti-Semite? Given the canons of contemporary discourse, it depends on how we define the term. Israel Shamir, writing in the Israeli newspaper H'aaretz, recently said that anyone who objected to American global cultural imperialism could now safely be termed an anti-Semite. Unless, of course, he is Jewish, in that instance he is referred to as a 'self-hating Jew,' a term which can be defined as referring to anyone who disagrees with the party line as articulated by Abe Foxman, the Bronfmans, the ADL, the AJC and all of the other leaders and organizations that have tried to turn Jews into the avant garde of the Cultural Revolution.

How then can Rabbi Dresner claim that Jews can bring about a reform of family life and morals when he's saying that Jews are responsible for that moral decline in the first place? The answer lies in defining the word 'Jew,' and that means distinguishing between the Rabbi Dresner Jew and the Woody Allen Jew. 'Jews,' Dresner tells us in a passage I have already cited, 'have . . . played a less than admirable role in the sexual revolution. That, however does not mean that they speak for Judaism, any more than antifamily Jewish feminists do.' The issue, in other words, revolves around the question, 'who speaks for the Jews?' Rabbi Dresner is a conservative, for whom the Torah is normative. That means that 'homosexuality is a violation of the order of creation' (p. 81). That, in turn, means that, on the issue of homosexuality, Rabbi Dresner is at odds with the majority of American Jews. That, in turn, leads to a paradox: America has become more Jewish over the course of the 20th century, but Jews have become less Jewish at the same time, if we define the Jew the way Dresner does, as a follower of the Torah. The Jew has become an American Cultural Hero, but he has become that largely by espousing sexual degeneracy. As a result, America is becoming simultaneously more Jewish, but less representative of what Rabbi Dresner believes. 'Twenty years ago,' Dresner writes,

Time magazine ran an article claiming that 'the United States is becoming more Jewish Among American intellectuals the Jew has even become a culture hero.' It went on to quote poet Robert Lowell, who declared that 'Jewishness is the center of today's literature much as the West was in the '30s.' Twenty years later (26 February 1990), Time repeated the same theme, informing us that 'Jews are news. It is an axiom of journalism. An indispensable one, too, because it is otherwise impossible to explain why the deeds and misdeeds of a dot-on-the-map Israel get an absurdly disproportionate amount of news coverage around the world.' (p. 275).

The unanswered question in the midst of all this breathless journalism is the meaning of the word Jew. Which is another way of saying, who speaks for the American Jew? Rabbi Dresner or Woody Allen? If numbers determine the truth, then the answer is clearly Woody Allen. But that raises other issues. If, as Dresner notes, 'American Jews accept the categorization of themselves as advocates of Woody Allen,' then Judaism is another word for 'sexual permissiveness and even perversity,' a doctrine which Dresner finds clearly unacceptable. Dresner takes his rule of thumb from Susan Handelman: 'The lifestyles of Jews should not determine the Jewish style of life.' The former, according to Dresner, 'should not be determined by the latter, even if the latter should become a majority in the Jewish community.' If American Jews were to become 'advocates of Woody Allen,' that would mean 'not only a betrayal of Jewish values but a betrayal of the Jewish people, for no one more than [Woody] Allen has enabled so many to view the Jew, especially the religious Jew, in so corrupt a manner' (p. 223).

It should be obvious by now that Dresner does not like Woody Allen, the classic example of how America has become more Jewish while at the same time 'American Jews are becoming less Jewish.' Because of his popularity and because the mainline Jewish organizations-which, Dresner notes, spend millions to ferret out anti-Semitism-leave his attacks on Jewish tradition unmentioned, Woody Allen has become a paradigm for the majority of American Jews. But in order to understand what that means, we first have to understand what Woody Allen symbolizes to the majority of American Jews.

Dresner's book is helpful in this regard. Woody Allen, according to Dresner, has had a 'persistent fascination' with incest. He has also been in psychoanalysis for over 30 years, which means that this fascination with incest, whether expressed in his writing ('It's a whole new ball game,' she said, pressing close to me. 'Marrying Mom has made you my father.') or his seduction of his and Mia Farrow's adopted daughter Soon Yi Previn is best explained by an analysis of Freud. Freud, too, was obsessed with incest. In his book *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud makes clear that, as in the case of the Pharaohs of Egypt, incest confers god-like status on its perpetrators. In the same book, Freud also claims that Moses was an Egyptian, in an attempt to de-legitimize the man who gave the law to Israel. David Bakan has written a book commenting on these passages in which he claims that Freud was a follower of the Jewish false Messiah Shabbetai Zevi and that his attack on Moses was really an attempt to abolish the law in the same way that Zevi did, which is to say through ritual impurity. Jews who promote sexual revolution are following in this tradition: 'They,' Dresner tells us, 'conjure up painful memories of the infamous seventeenth century false messiah Sabbatai Tzvi or his successor, Jacob Frank. Their coming was to mark a new age when the rule of Torah was to be superseded-'What was forbidden is now permitted'-and transgressions would become a mitzvot' (p. 160).

'For those who seek the forbidden in Jewish guise,' Dresner continues, 'Sabbatianism points the way.' This is so because it gets to the very heart of Judaism, a religion according to Dresner, which was forged in opposition to the fertility cults of Canaan and the rest of the ancient middle east. 'In biblical times,' Dresner continues, 'Judaism waged a battle against sexual excess not unlike the struggle now in progress-and in those earlier times, Mosaic law was victorious. Unbridled sexuality lay at the heart of ancient pagan religion' (p. 66, my emphasis). In Dresner's view, Jewish history is one long battle against sexual deviance. 'The early biblical narratives can be read as a continuous attack on the widespread sexual deviance that challenged and often seduced the Israelites, whose fallings away Scripture scrupulously records' (p. 82). What crime was so great that it provoked God to destroy mankind, except for Noah and his family, with a flood? 'According to the most ancient understanding of the biblical story found in rabbinic sources, it was the violation of the natural order of sexual life' (p. 83). 'God,' Dresner says at another point, 'is long-suffering of all manner of crime, save sexual immorality' (p. 85).

Even if Judaism was forged in opposition to pagan fertility cults (Rabbi Judah said in the name of Rav: 'The Israelites knew there was no substance to pagan idolatry. They took it up only to engage more freely in forbidden sexual practices.'), Israel's 'victory over pagan idolatry was never complete. . . . The Book of Kings . . . demonstrates how closely Israel came to being swallowed up by the powerful cults' (p. 140).

That battle has continued to the present day. In fact, the impression that one gets by reading Dresner's book is that over the course of the twentieth century in America the Jews have suffered one of the greatest defeats in their history. Dresner blames this defeat on assimilation, but the irony is that the Jews were corrupting America's morals at the same time that they were undergoing moral corruption themselves by assimilating so successfully in America. Assimilation means the adoption of pagan sexual mores of the sort that nearly destroyed the Israelites at the time of the Book of Kings. But America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was no Canaan. It was known for its moral rectitude if not its 'Puritanism,' as anyone who has read the novels of Henry James could attest. The Jews who came to America did not come as Joshua came to Canaan. The Jews who arrived from the Polish shtetl arrived to find a ruling class more interested in Darwin than Christ. They adopted the worst aspects of modernity and became both corrupted and, because of their influence in the media, corrupter simultaneously. Just what was Jay Gatsby supposed to learn from Tom Buchanan, other than what clothes he was supposed to wear? The fact that the white race was being corrupted, according to Goddard's (i.e. Lothrop Stoddard's) book? The success Jews have achieved in media, publishing, academe, etc. over the course of the 20th century, only magnified the corrupting influence which modernity inflicted on them and which they would in turn inflict on their host culture as well, as the letter to the California Lawyer which Dresner found so disturbing indicated. Dresner's antipathy toward both Woody Allen and Isaac Bashevis Singer stems from the fact that he is both an American and a Jew and from the fact that Woody Allen and Singer can be seen as corrupting influences from both perspectives. Dresner's anger is based on the fact that he sees American Jews succumbing to the perennial temptation of sexual idolatry by following their influence.

The connection between Singer and Shabbetai Zevi is nothing if not explicit. Dresner notes his early 'fascination with Sabbatianism.' 'I read whatever I could,' Singer writes, 'about the era of Sabbatai Zevi, in whose footsteps Jacob Frank had followed . . . In these works I found everything I had been pondering, hysteria, sex, fanaticism, superstition' (p. 184).

Dresner mentions Shabbetai Zevi and his successor Jacob Frank in connection with the sexual corruption of contemporary Jews. Not only have America's Jews been corrupted by Sabbatianism, the Sabbatian infection has become the majority position: the lifestyle of Jews has trumped the Jewish style of life based on the Torah as the Jewish norm.

To cloak perversion with piety has a frightening ring, conjuring up memories of the Asherah in the temple and the antics of Jacob Frank, precisely because it blurs the distinctions between the Jewish style of life and the lifestyle of Jews, between what Judaism prescribes and what some Jews regrettably choose to do. It tends to validate the position that whatever Jews say or do can be identified as Judaism. It cripples the ability of Judaism to address the doings and sayings of Jews. How can a religion that is based four-square on marriage and the home countenance the revival of the sexual lifestyle of ancient (and modern) idolatry (p. 155).

A New and Frightening Drama

Dresner is in many ways more upset about Singer's popularity than he is about Woody Allen's. 'Are Singer's writings "true"? he wonders. 'The corruption, the adultery, the demonic, the philandering, the decay, the perversion that pervade Singer's picture of Polish Jewry-is it all true? And if it is not 'true,' then why has someone not said so?' (p. 177). The silence of American Jews over Singer and Allen

indicates ambivalence, which is to say, 'their secret desire to repudiate the moral direction of three thousand years of Jewish history in favor of the worship of sensuality and fear of the demonic, . . . finding meaning in their animal nature instead of in the power of man to transcend himself.' American Jews have embraced Singer's writings, 'because they express what Jews secretly desire.' And what is that? Sexual liberation in Jewish garb, which is to say, Sabbatianism, which is, according to Dresner, 'the one movement in Jewish history that not only broke the moral yoke of Sinai but provided a theological justification for it: 'in the transgression of the mitzvah.'"

The fact that Singer has declared his Sabbatian sympathies publicly coupled with the fact that he has become so popular with American Jews indicates that the curtain may be going up 'on a new and frightening drama in Jewish life.' That means that the modern Jew (especially in America) is now the devotee of 'an alternate faith.' Jewish silence on Singer 'may be a sign of a sickness so severe we do not perceive its symptoms.' Dresner, as well as Heschel and a number of other Yiddish writers familiar with the situation in Poland before World War II, considered Singer's writings one long calumny of eastern European Jews. If this is so, why are American Jews so interested in promoting the calumny? Because if eastern European Jewry is what Singer says it was, then, according to Dresner, American Jews 'need feel no guilt; they can go about their way, not much different from other Americans, philandering, corrupting, and making of their faith a sham in the comforting belief that it was, after all, always like that. That's what the Jews of Eastern Europe were-philanderers, adulterers and corrupters: why should American Jews be better?'

The conclusion which Dresner draws is inescapable. If Woody Allen speaks for the majority of American Jews, then American Jews have been corrupted; they are now no longer followers of Moses but rather followers of Shabbetai Zevi. In the process of succumbing to that corruption, they have played a major role in the corruption of American morals and culture. American cultural life in the last half of the 20th century, in other words, has been dominated by Jewish rebellion against the Torah and the adoption of the sexual practices and worldview of Shabbetai Zevi. The overwhelming majority of American Jews-as evidenced by the surveys Dresner cites-have defined themselves as sexual revolutionaries, and because of the disproportionate role which Jews play in publishing and the media, they have, in effect, established Sabbatian sexual degeneracy as the American cultural norm. According to Dresner, Judaism is about nothing 'if not the centrality of virtue.' 'How,' he wonders, 'can a Jew maintain any other position?' And as if he has already learned the answer by reading his own book, he replies with some understatement, 'Nevertheless, some do.' Judaism, according to Dresner, 'stands as inexorably against the new paganism as it did against the old. And so should the Jew,' but at the same time that the American Jew was reaching cultural prominence, he was also converting to Sabbatianism, 'an alternate faith.' As a result, 'Jewish rebellion has broken out on several levels,' one being 'the prominent role of Jews as advocates to sexual experimentation.'

Dresner again adverts to 'significant elements of America's cultural elite,' which 'by its example, desensitizes this nation morally.' By stating the case this way, he moves into another area, namely, the problem which this group of Jews has created for America and the fact that their Jewishness has in effect, prohibited others from addressing the problem. Again he deals with the issue indirectly. 'How could so many American Jewish leaders,' he wonders, 'have been taken in by Allen?' Dresner has the cart before the horse here. Those Jewish leaders have used Allen as a way of redefining the American Jew in their image. They have used Allen to define the Jew as a sexually deviant cultural bolshevist. As a result, anyone who objects to sexual deviance or Hollywood's promotion of it gets defined as an anti-Semite. The equation is very simple. Since Hollywood is run by Jews, being anti-Hollywood means being an anti-Semite. Dresner cites Richard Goldstein, writing in the liberal Village Voice as an example of this sort of thinking. According to Goldstein, 'the Republican attack on Hollywood and the 'media elite,' is a code for anti-Semitism, because 'these are words that since the '50s connote Jewishness to people. The Republicans can't attack Jews directly, so they use codes. The notion of Woody as a kind of Jewish icon lends itself to the ideas of Jews subverting the Christian family, an idea which is very old and very dark.'

Yes, it is a very dark idea. But who's promoting it? The Woody Allen Jews, as if to provoke the very anti-Semitism which will vindicate them in their own eyes and at the same time justify the descent into sexual degeneracy which their consciences must find troubling from time to time. The Woody Allen Jew is, in other words, engaged in Kulturkampf not only with the 'Christian' culture which he wants to destroy but with the Sam Dresner Jews who would define the Torah as normative. Since Woody Allen is a cultural icon for most Jews, most Jews have defined themselves as sexual degenerates. Dresner quotes a columnist in the Village Voice, who writes:

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who think Woody Allen is the genius spokesman of our collective angst and those how think he's a filthy Jewish liberal . . . elitist Communist madman. Another name for those two groups are Democrats and Republicans.

That a Jew can write this way is some indication to Dresner that 'the underground has taken over.' The world, he says, at another point, has been turned upside-down. Judaism has been redefined by the country's 'cultural elite,' which is to say it has been redefined by American Jews. Hollywood has triumphed in promulgating its values, and one major part of that triumph has been the redefinition of the Jew from someone who believed in the centrality of virtue into someone who is a promoter of sexual deviance. Jews, in other words, are responsible for America's moral decline not just because they dominate the media but also because of how they have redefined themselves, something which emerged in a recent discussion of Jewish participation in the pornography 'industry' on the Internet.

Luke Ford

Luke Ford was raised as a Seventh Day Adventist in Australia. He came to Los Angeles to study and after coming down with chronic fatigue syndrome, spent his time in convalescence listening to Dennis Prager's radio program. As a result of listening to Prager, he converted to orthodox Judaism. Since Los Angeles is the center of the pornography industry and since Ford was also interested in pornography, he noticed that Jews dominate the porn industry in Hollywood and decided to discuss the issue on his website, lukeford.com (Since this discussion - and perhaps because of it - lukeford.com has been

taken over by the porn industry. Luke Ford's lucubrations on things Jewish, things pornographic, and things in general are now available only at lukeford.net) Luke Ford noticed that 'secular Jews play a disproportionate role throughout the sex industry':

Leading modern Jewish pornographers include Ron Braverman, John Bone, Wesley Emerson, Paul Fishbein, Herbert Feinberg AKA Mickey Fine, Hank Weinstein, Lenny Friedlander, Bobby Hollander, Rubin Gottesman, Fred Hirsch and his children Steve and Marci, Paul 'Norman' Apstein, Steve Orenstein, Jack Richmond (Legend CEO), Theodore Rothstein, Reuben and David Sturman, Ron Sullivan, Jerome Tanner, Armand Weston, Sam and Mitch Weston (Spinelli).

Jews accounted for most of the leading male performers of the 1970s and '80s. Hebrew studs include Buck Adams, Bobby Astyr, (Bobby Charles) R. Bolla (Robert Kerman), Jerry Butler (Paul Siderman), Seymore Butts (Adam Glasser), Roger Caine (Al Levitsky), David Christopher (Bernie Cohen), Steve Drake, Jesse Eastern, Jamie Gillis (Jamie Gurman), Ron Jeremy (Hyatt), Michael Knight, William Margold, Ashley Moore (Steve Tucker), David Morris, George Payne, Ed Powers (Mark Arnold aka Mark Krinski), Harry Reems (Herbert Streicher), Dave Ruby, Herschel Savage (Harvey Cowen), Carter Stevens (Mal Warub), Marc Stevens, Paul Thomas (Phil Tobias), Marc Wallace (Marc Goldberg), Randy West (Andy Abrams) and Jack Wrangler.

Jewish female performers include Avalon, Jenny Baxter (Jenny Wexler), Busty Belle (Tracy Praeger), Chelsea Blake, Tiffany Blake, Bunny Bleu (Kim Warner), J.R. Carrington, Lee Carroll (Leslie Barris), Blair Castle/Brooke Fields (Allison Shandibal), Courtney/Natasha/Eden (Natasha Zimmerman), Daphne (Daphne Franks), Barbara Dare (Stacy Mitnick), April Diamond, Jeanna Fine, Alexis Gold, Terri Hall, Heather Hart, Nina Hartley (Hartman), C.J. Laing (Wendy Miller), Frankie Leigh (Cynthia Hope Geller), Gloria Leonard, Traci Lords (Nora Louise Kuzma), Amber Lynn, Tonisha Mills, Melissa Monet, Susan Nero, Scarlett O. (Catherine Goldberg), Tawny Pearl (Susan Pearlman), Nina Preta, Tracey Prince, Raylene, Janey Robbins (Robin Lieberman), Mila Shegol, Alexandra Silk, Susan Sloan, Annie Sprinkle (Ellen Steinberg), Karen Summer (Dana Alper), Cindy West, Zara Whites (Amy Kooiman) and Ona Zee (Ona Simms). (This citation, as well as all of the subsequent citations have been taken from the discussion of Jews and pornography at the lukeford.com website, all of which have been removed by the site's new owners.)

If, as Ford notes, 'the Torah [Pentateuch] commands Jews 'to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,' and Judaism strongly opposes porn, why do Jews dominate porn?' Is the ethnic connection purely fortuitous? Is it like the fact that many policemen in New York are Irish? Is there an ethnic connection between being Irish and law enforcement? Perhaps all of the Irish who got arrested in New York in the nineteenth and early twentieth century for drunken brawling were impressed with how policemen handled themselves. In other words, probably not. Is there some necessary ethnic connection between being Irish and putting out fires? Probably not.

Is there a connection between being a Jew and being involved in pornography? That question is more difficult to answer. One Jewish male porn star responded to the question, 'Why are most of the men that do porno Jewish?' with a simple answer, 'Jewish mothers!' Jewish men, in other words, are involved in porn because they 'are taught to respect women and help them. They also are nonthreatening to most women. Let's face it, Ron Jeremy is not exactly Mike Tyson... You'll usually find that the real mean bastards (physically violent) in the industry are not Jewish (that includes, producers, directors, boyfriends, agents, etc). Jewish guys are more manipulative....' Again, it's hard to tell whether this answer is motivated by a desire for self-exculpation or a desire to promote anti-Semitic stereotypes.

Outraged Response

When William Cash wrote his already cited article in the British magazine *The Spectator* discussing Jewish dominance in Hollywood and, therefore, the pornography industry, the discussion prompted an outraged response from Abraham H. Foxman, head of the Anti-Defamation League. To raise the issue meant that one was guilty of propagating an anti-Semitic canard, even though, in the case of Luke Ford, it was a Jew who raised the issue. 'Those Jews who enter the pornography industry,' Foxman opined, 'have done so as individuals pursuing the American dream, not as representatives of their religious group. Moreover, anti-Semites never seem to take note of the fact that the most prominent pornographers in America are Hugh Hefner and Larry Flynt, neither of whom is the least bit Jewish. Finally, though individual Jews may play a role in pornography, Jewishness does not.'

Foxman then fell back on the same justification for obscenity that Irving Thalberg used in his fight with the Legion of Decency. Pornography is controlled by 'consumers,' most of whom are Gentiles. Therefore, Gentiles are ultimately responsible for pornography. According to Foxman, even if Jews dominate a particular field, as is the case with both Hollywood and the related pornography industry, that bears no relationship to the fact that they are Jews, no matter how one defines the term. To say otherwise is to be an anti-Semite.

Foxman is being more than a little disingenuous here. In mentioning Larry Flynt and Hugh Hefner as the paradigmatic Gentile pornographers, he failed to point out that 1) that Hugh Hefner would object to being called a pornographer and 2) that Larry Flynt is a significant contributor to the ADL. He also failed to mention, as Rabbi Dresner points out in his book, that Hugh Hefner received the ADL's freedom award in 1980. Taking a less partisan view of the question, Dresner feels that

The religion of impulse likewise found significant Jewish involvement. An unusually high percentage of the material on sexual liberation was written by Jews, as well as among its advocates. On a more commercial level, for example, Jews have been strongly represented in the Playboy enterprises. B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League had no problem, for example, when some years back they presented their American Freedom Award at a fashionable black-tie dinner-dance to Hugh Hefner. . . . About the honoree, the ADL says, with an apparent straight face, that the empire he founded has had a far-reaching impact, not only on the publishing industry, but on the mores of American society as well.

In other words, the ADL was rewarding Hefner for the role he played in bringing about widespread

moral corruption and the spread of sexual deviance in America. The question remains, why would the Jews at the ADL be interested in rewarding this sort of behavior? Why, as Dresner asks in his book, did American Jewry remain silent when the ADL conferred its freedom award. 'Both the Jewish establishment and nonestablishment observers,' Dresner laments, 'took it in stride, raising not a finger of protest. It was Catholic William Buckley of National Review who pointed to the Jewish issue.'

And what exactly is the 'Jewish issue' here? The answer depends a lot on how the term Jew gets defined, especially by the Jews themselves. Ford claims that the Jews who dominate pornography are what Rabbi Dresner would call 'advocates of Woody Allen,' which is to say, Sabbatian in their orientation. It's, in other words, not a coincidence that they are Jewish and involved in pornography. Their involvement in pornography flows naturally from the way they define themselves as Jews. Luke Ford, according to one report, 'insists that pornography constitutes a deliberate attempt by 'non-Jewish Jews,' alienated from normative Judaism and Christian mores, to undermine Western civilization.'

According to Luke Ford's discussion, the animus of the Jewish Cultural Revolutionary is historical and ethnic. Pornography is just one weapon in a panoply of cultural warfare which gets waged half in self-defense, half in residual animus against traditional majority Christian cultures, even when, as is the case of the United States, the original prescription no longer fits the actual situation. According to Ford,

that is their aim because they are Jews, and they are reaching for even more control than they already have. This is the historic *modus operandi* of the Jews. They are outsiders everywhere except in Israel, and when they first appear in any Gentile society and begin reaching for power they are resisted. The society treats the Jews as outsiders, as aliens, and attempts to keep them from gaining control. The Jewish method of countering this opposition is to work quietly to accumulate as much wealth as possible. At the same time they work to corrupt the society's leaders with money and to sow dissension among the masses, to set one social class against another, to break up the society's solidarity and its cohesiveness, so that there will be less resistance to their penetration of the society.

During the latter half of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th century fomenting class warfare has been their most successful technique in Europe. In Russia, for example, they would have had difficulty in corrupting the enormously wealthy aristocracy with bribes, but their technique of fomenting class warfare succeeded in destroying Russian society and letting the Jews seize control through their Marxist movement. In the United States, on the other hand, where the political leaders are essentially hucksters and lawyers and the working class is relatively well off compared to Russia, the Jews have had much more success with corruption than with their attempts to foment class warfare. . . . and in the last half of the 20th century their principal weapon for this purpose, more important than corruption or class warfare, has been their control of the mass media of news and entertainment.

Jewish involvement in pornography, in other words, goes deeper both commercially and philosophically than Abe Foxman is willing to admit. Once the majority of American Jews defined themselves as sexually deviant, pornography, along with homosexual rights, feminism, and New Age goddess worship, would become a natural expression of their worldview, and since they controlled Hollywood, they were in the position to make their worldview normative for the culture at large. The traditional animus against majority culture combined with a decline in moral scruple would naturally lead 'the advocates of Woody Allen' to become involved in pornography as a form of cultural warfare.

The most significant thinker in this regard is Wilhelm Reich, a Jew from Galicia who was a student of both Sigmund Freud (quite literally) and Karl Marx and a man who tried to create an intellectual marriage between their two quintessentially revolutionary ideologies. Reich wrote the book on sexual revolution and many Jewish porn stars have read it. Richard Pacheco is one.

'Five years before I got my first part in an adult film,' Pacheco explained, 'I went down to an audition for an X-rated film with my hair down to my ass, a copy of Wilhelm Reich's *Sexual Revolution* under my arm and yelling about work, love and sex, which were Reich's three principles. These things have got to be in balance or your life is going to fucked.' Pacheco didn't get the job, but he didn't stop auditioning either. Nor did he stop using his Jewishness as the rationalization for his participation in pornography. 'Five years later,' Pacheco continued, 'I auditioned for another X-rated film. That very day, I also interviewed at Hebrew Union Seminary to do rabbinical study. I made the choice that the kind of rabbi I would be, if I became one, was one that could have been performing in sex films as part of his experience.'

Jewish Porn Star

Nina Hartley (nee Hartman) also sees a connection between being Jewish and being a porn star. As Rabbi Dresner might have noted, it's a long way from the Torah to Debbie Duz Dishes, in which she plays 'a sexually insatiable Jewish housewife who enjoys sex with anyone who rings the doorbell.' Debbie Duz Dishes is Hartley's biggest selling, Jewish themed porn video. Hartley tried to articulate the connection between being Jewish and being a porn star in an interview with Jewish pornographer Sheldon Ranz in the Spring 1989 edition of the left-wing Jewish journal *Shmate*. She begins by making the sort of morphological distinction that Rabbi Dresner made in his book. She begins by explaining that she is 'Jewish culturally but not religiously.' That means that being Jewish gets defined in an essentially negative sense. Being Jewish means being anti-Christian. That means that 'I'm generally less subservient than a typical WASP female. And I've discovered certain gender interactions are different between Jewish and non-Jewish couples.' Hartley was born in 1956 and grew up in Berkeley, 'which is heavily influenced by [secular] Jewish culture. It's an intellectual town. A lot of the people who set the political agenda are Jewish.' Hartley, in other words, can see pornography as the fulfillment of 'Jewish values' because those values reflect not the Torah but rather the mores of secular Jews living in Berkeley in the '60s, a time of social upheaval. That means that 'there are things that you learn and ways that you think that you don't understand are more Jewish than not until you go into mainstream America and realize that other people don't think this way.'

Jews, in other words, are different than 'mainstream America,' something she defines as vaguely Christian. Since Jews like Hartley are not Christians, they define themselves as the opposite of Christianity. Forgetting that Christianity and Judaism both view the Torah and the moral code it expresses as canonical, Hartley then goes on to define the Jew as someone who opposes morals as the Bible defines them. Once again she makes a stab at justifying pornography as something essentially compatible with being Jewish. She can only do this, of course, by taking as normative not the Torah but rather the history of Jews as she has lived that history by coming of age in Berkeley during the '60s, which means, of course, accepting the history of Jewish secularization in the wake of the Enlightenment, and that means, of course, taking into account the influence that communism had on her parents' generation.

'I'm proud,' Hartley continues, 'of my heritage's intellectual history and its empathy with the persecuted. But I'm no Zionist. Politically, I'm left-wing. I want everyone to have a job, everyone to have food, clothing, shelter, medical care and education. Utopia might be communist but in the meantime we have to have socialism. I want everyone to have a piece.'

At some point, the baby boomer Jewish revolutionaries redefined the revolution. Unlike their communist parents, who saw the revolution as revolving around economic issues, the baby boomer Jewish revolutionaries saw the essential issues as sexual. Like Richard Pacheco, they took Wilhelm Reich as their guide, instead of Trotsky or Lenin, the quintessential revolutionary figures for their parents' generation. As Igor Shafarevich noted, socialism at its most basic has always had a sexual component. It has always meant the communality of wives as well as the communality of property. So the idea of 'democratic' sex has been part of the socialist tradition from the beginning. But the idea of sexual liberation has also been refined in the course of history as well, and the Jewish porn stars who see pornography as an expression of their Jewishness are aware of those refinements as well. In fact it was the earlier Jewish infatuation with socialism which made the Jewish justification of pornography possible. Hartley 'descends ideologically from the Marxist Jewish philosopher Herbert Marcuse who prophesied that a socialist utopia would free individuals to achieve sexual satisfaction. Nina descends literally from a line of radical Jews. Her grandfather (a physics professor) and her father (a radio announcer) belonged to the Communist party.' One of Hartley's brothers is an Orthodox Jew who is not pleased with her vocation as porn star. As a result, they don't speak to each other. Rather than leave it at that, Hartley goes out of her way to portray him as the black sheep of the family. Ranz echoes her animus: 'I don't understand how a family where the parents have a Communist background can raise a kid who grows up to be an Orthodox Jew. How did that happen?'

It is a classic instance of the transvaluation of values that is part of contemporary Jewish identity. Who gets to excommunicate whom? The Sabbathian Jews will naturally try to excommunicate the Orthodox as deviant. The fact that they outnumber the Orthodox so considerably makes their attempt less laughable than it might otherwise seem. The connection between Jews and pornography is like the connection between Jews and Bolshevism. Both are forms of revolutionary activity, ultimately traceable to Jewish concepts that have been secularized. Jews become involved in pornography for reasons similar to why they become involved in Communism, which is to say, not just because they happened to be Jews but because being Jewish as they and Sabbatai Zevi and Wilhelm Reich defined it found logical expression in producing pornography as a form of cultural warfare through moral subversion. Ultimately, the relationship between Jews and pornography is similar to how Marx described the relationship between the communist party and the proletariat. Just as the Jews were the vanguard of revolutionary activity in Russia, so they are in the vanguard of sexual revolution in the United States. The Jewish concept of the chosen people naturally transformed itself into the concept of the revolutionary vanguard as soon as the Torah evaporated as the core of Jewish identity. Messianic politics replaced waiting for the Messiah.

In *The Politics of Bad Faith*, David Horowitz described how a religious paradigm, the Exodus, became a political paradigm, in other words, how the eschaton got immanentized and transformed into a Messianic political movement. Dresner sees much the same thing. In becoming, in Dresner's words, 'the chief advocates of modernity,' Jews have dedicated themselves to Communism with a messianic fervor:

They became, for example, disciples of the new politics of communism. Some 30 percent of the early leaders of the revolution were estimated to have been Jewish. Emancipated from their ancient faith by the onslaught of modern thought, which the antiquated Judaism of the time was ill-prepared to refute, they transferred their yet unexpended messianic fervor into the new religion of Marx. (p. 325).

And when the attraction of communism began to pale they dedicated themselves just as fervently to sexual liberation. It would be naive, or as Haberer says, 'shortsighted' to claim in light of the overwhelming amount of evidence that Jews just happened to be revolutionaries just as Abe Foxman at a later date would claim that Jews just happened to be involved in pornography. Both communism and pornography are forms of revolutionary activity, and Jews were drawn to both precisely because of the hold that both Messianic Socialism and Sabbatianism acquired over them once this group of Jews abandoned traditional religious practice, something which happened to large numbers of them after they arrived in America. Nathan Glazer describes the process:

Judaism is even more vulnerable to the unsettling influence of modernity than is Christianity. Judaism emphasizes acts, rituals, habits a way of life Once one had found-as so many immigrants did-that it was more convenient to work on Saturdays or to shave or to abandon traditional dress, one had no body of doctrine to fall back upon that could explain what remained really important in Judaism-indeed, the question was whether anything was really more important than the rituals established by God's word. Under these circumstances, an entire way of life disintegrated.

'Jews who came to America,' Elliott Abrams writes, 'were usually. . . not the most devout people in their communities' anyway. The decline in faith and morals, however, did not mean that they stopped defining themselves as Jews. Socialism and sexual liberation simply filled up the religious vessels from which the Torah had evaporated. Revolution, in other words, was another way of being a Jew, a

secular humanist Jew of the sort Leo Pfeffer praised.

Irving Kristol, in his youth a follower of Trotsky and now a neoconservative, gives expression to the Messianic, universalist vision that both neoconservatism and Trotskyism have in common. The Jewish revolutionaries, according to Kristol:

did not forsake their Jewish heritage to replace it with another form of cultural identity or ethnic belonging. What they sought can best be described as an abstract and futuristic idealism of assimilation qua emancipation in a denationalized and secularized democratic society, ideally of universal scope. Leaving the world of their childhood did not necessarily imply its total abandonment in one act of irreversible forgetfulness. For many this departure under the sacred halo of socialism was the next best solution to their own existential problems—a solution that was enormously attractive since it also held out the utopian promise of the 'genuine emancipation' of all Jews in a socialist republic of universal brotherhood devoid of national, religious, and social discrimination or even distinctions.

As Irving Kristol, and other Jews have made clear, Secular Humanism is the continuation of revolutionary thought in America. Just as socialism was attractive to significant numbers of Jews in Russia during the 19th century, Secular Humanism has a certain attraction among Jews now - indeed, if Kristol is right, among most Jews. Kristol's description of Secular Humanism highlights the similarities it shares with Jewish revolutionary thought in Russia:

where emancipation unleashed within the Jewish community latent messianic passions that pointed to a new era of fraternal 'universalism' of belief for mankind. What is now called 'prophetic Judaism' gradually edged out 'rabbinic Judaism' - the distinction itself being a derivative of the secular-humanist impulse. By the time the mass of Jews, mostly Central and East European, came to the United States, they were already secular-humanist in their politics, i.e., somewhere Left of Center-if not in other respects (Irving Kristol, *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* [New York: The Free Press, 1995], p. 448).

Secular Humanism, no matter how corrosive it is of faith and morals and a health social order is, as Kristol puts it, 'good for Jews,' because

it . . . permits individual Jews a civic equality and equality of opportunity dreamed of by previous Jewish generations. It is natural, therefore for American Jews to be, not only accepting of secular-humanist doctrines, but enthusiastic exponents. That explains why American Jews [like Leo Pfeffer] are so vigilant about removing all the signs and symbols of traditional religions from 'the public square,' so insistent that religion be merely a 'private affair,' so determined that separation of church and state be interpreted to mean the separation of all institutions from any signs of a connection with traditional religions. The spread of secular humanism throughout American life has been 'good for Jews,' no question about it. So the more, the better (p. 449).

In her recent memoir, *An Old Wife's Tale*, Midge Decter notices the same phenomenon, but with a little more Angst. 'It is no secret,' she writes:

that some significant part in the emptying of the [moral-religious] public square had been played by Jewish liberals. It was understandable to me why this was so, because their long history had left many Jews with an atavistic fear of Christian authority - so the more public life could be kept strictly secular the safer they felt. But understand it or not, I believe that the religion-free public condition to which they have made such a vital contribution had left American society, and particularly American culture, vulnerable to pernicious influences.

Influences like pornography? Suddenly Nina Hartley's description of herself as 'the blonde Jew' porn star from 'a long line of radical Jews,' who 'wants everyone to have a piece - a piece of sex, a piece of the means of production, a piece of a warm communist community' and 'a piece of the promised Messianic Age - now' doesn't seem as far-fetched as it does on first reading. The link between the Torah and pornography - in other words between the Jewish law and its antithesis - is Russian Jewish Bolshevism - with a big assist from Wilhelm Reich - and its American legacy, brought here by the refugees from the pogroms which the revolutionaries set in motion when they killed the Czar. Daniel Goldhagen's demonization of Pius XII is part of that ongoing struggle between the Jewish revolutionary mind and its main counter-revolutionary opponent, the Catholic Church. Then as now, the same dynamic applies. The revolutionaries by their actions generate animus against all Jews. When someone has the temerity to criticize the excesses of people like Goldhagen, the Jewish organizations like the ADL turn what is an issue of scholarship and truth into a an ethnic/religious issue, thereby creating the very thing they purport to oppose, namely ethnic animus.

Pornography is, in other words, one of the weapons which 'Jews with an atavistic fear of Christian authority' have turned to to weaken the dominant culture in a country and, thereby, assure that the Jews, always a minority, will go unmolested by their 'Christian' neighbors.

The Israelis have recently shown themselves well-versed in what one could call the military use of pornography. At 4:30 PM on March 30, 2002, Israeli military forces took over Palestinian TV stations when they occupied Ramallah in the West Bank, immediately shutting them down. What followed was a little more unusual. Shortly after occupying the Al-Watan TV station, the Israeli forces began broadcasting pornography over its transmitter. Eventually, according to a report from *The Advertiser*, an Australian newspaper, the Israelis expanded their cultural offensive against the Palestinian people by broadcasting pornography over two other Palestinian stations, the Ammwaj and Al-Sharaq channels. One 52-year-old Palestinian mother of three children, according to the report in the *The Advertiser*, complained about 'the deliberate psychological damage caused by these broadcasts.' The only Palestinian station not taken over by the Israelis ran a written message at the bottom of its screen claiming that 'Anything currently shown on Al-Watan and other local TV channels has nothing to do with Palestinian programs but is being broadcast by the Israeli occupation forces. We urge parents to

take precautions.'

In addition to being outraged, the Palestinians were bewildered. 'Why in the world,' one correspondent to Omanforum.com wondered, 'should one do such a thing?' If we turn to the dominant culture for an answer, we can only become more confused because according to dominant culture's explanation, pornography means freedom.

So making use of the hermeneutic provided by the dominant culture in films like *Boogie Nights* and *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, Israeli troops began broadcasting pornography over captured Palestinian TV stations because they wanted to spread freedom among the Palestinian people.

Somehow that doesn't sound right. The simple fact of the matter is that this incident simply cannot be explained according to the principles available in contemporary American culture. In order to understand the disparity between the official explanation of pornography and what might be termed its military use, we have to go back to the ancients.

The story of Samson and Delilah might be a good place to start. Israel was invincible militarily then too - at least that part hasn't changed - so the Philistines decided that they had to get at the Israelite leader by other than military means. Unable to defeat him in battle, they decided to seduce him sexually. Once Samson succumbed to Delilah's wiles, he lost his power, and Israel lost its leader. They could find him then not on the field of battle, but rather to use Milton's phrase 'eyeless in Gaza, grinding at the mill with slaves.'

The story of the Palestinian TV stations broadcasting pornography has a curiously Biblical ring to it. Having learned their lesson, the Israelis decided to turn the tables on their opponents, because they knew that a blind opponent is no opponent at all, and because they knew - as the ancient Greeks knew - that lust makes a man blind. St. Thomas Aquinas, giving voice to that same tradition over a millennium later said that lust 'darkens the mind.' Suddenly, Israel's use of pornography in their battle against the Palestinians isn't so inexplicable anymore because a blind opponent is a weak opponent. A blind opponent is no opponent at all.

Luke Ford makes a similar point in his discussion of Jewish involvement in pornography. 'Why does porn attract so many non-Jewish [i.e., Sabbatian] Jews?' Because 'even when Jews live in a society that welcomes them instead of harassing them, many Jews hate the majority culture.' Pornography is a way of weakening the majority culture by moral subversion. Hence, Jewish involvement in pornography. Jews often lead the way in the application of new technology. That meant using high resolution photography, the VCR and the Internet as delivery systems for pornography just as it meant dynamite, forgery and smuggling in bringing down the Czar in Russia. English professor Jay Gertzman, whose father and uncle were arrested on obscenity charges in Philadelphia in the '50s, writes about the disproportionate influence of Jews in the sex book trade in his 2000 book *Bookleggers and Smuthounds: The Trade In Erotica 1920-1940*: 'The ethnic flavor of prewar erotica distribution is still with us, although, except for extreme right-wing hate groups, critics of sexual explicitness do not overtly exploit the fact' (p. 289). Take note, Abe Foxman.

'While few Jews are radical, many radicals (and pornographers) are Jews. Writes non-Jew Ernest van den Haag in his book *The Jewish Mystique*, 'Out of one hundred Jews, five may be radicals, but out of ten radicals, five are likely to be Jewish.'" Like Sam Dresner, Luke Ford feels that

Virtually all movements to change the world come from the Jews - Christianity, secular humanism, Marxism, Socialism and Communism, feminism, and the labor movement. That's part of the reason that Jews are hated. The world doesn't want to be changed.

Rooted in nothing, radical Jews frequently seek to make others equally rootless by tearing down their religious, national, communal and traditional allegiances. Such Jews carry on the traditional Jewish hatred of false gods but without offering anything to replace the scorned allegiances. . . . Rather, the most important result of the domination of non-Jewish Jews in these fields is their war on traditional values. Porn is just one expression of this rebellion against standards, against the disciplined life of obedience to Torah that marks a Jew living Judaism.

Pornography, as a result, becomes a Jewish fantasy. Even when Catholics are involved, they are generally involved on Jewish terms. According to one industry insider, 'the leading male performers through the 1980s came from secular Jewish upbringings and the females from Roman Catholic day schools.' The standard porn scenario became as a result a Polish Jewish fantasy, the horny Jew schtupping the Catholic shiksa. Nina Hartley, the already mentioned Jewish porn star tends to agree, 'I have not yet met a Jewish guy who wasn't a horny rabbit,' she says explaining Jewish male involvement in pornography in her 1989 interview in the Jewish magazine *Schmate*. 'Plus, they get to have sex with all these beautiful blonde women... Where else are you going to get a succession of shiksas [non- Jewish women] to bed you down?'

What Miss Hartley leaves out of her description is the cultural dimension. Pornography becomes a way of defiling Christian women, which, as Eldridge Cleaver pointed out in another context, is another way of defiling Christianity and all that it stands for. 'Rape,' according to Cleaver, 'was an insurrectionary act.' By defiling the white woman, Cleaver 'was defying and trampling upon the white man's law, upon his system of values,' something Cleaver found 'most satisfying' (*Soul on Ice*, p. 14).

The same thing could be said of Jewish involvement in pornography. When Luke Ford asked Al Goldstein, the publisher of *Screw*, why so many Jews were involved in pornography, Goldstein, unlike Abe Foxman, did not say the connection was fortuitous. He instead got to what one might call the theological heart of the matter. 'The only reason that Jews are in pornography,' Goldstein responded, 'is that we think that Christ sucks. Catholicism sucks. We don't believe in authoritarianism.'

Goldstein's response is worth pondering. Being Jewish provides Goldstein with a rationalization for being in an unsavory business. The fact that Abe Foxman refuses to disagree with Goldstein over what it means to be a Jew only strengthens Goldstein's position, just as it weakens the position of people like Sam Dresner, who feel that being a Jew involves adherence to the Torah and, therefore, the moral

law. Goldstein can hide behind centuries old Jewish antipathy to Christianity as the justification for what he is doing. Jews like Goldstein have become so habituated to defining themselves as the antithesis of things Christian that they start to define themselves in opposition to things which both Judaism and Christianity hold in common as well, namely, the moral law in general and sexual prohibitions in particular.

'I'm God'

Luke Ford interviewed Goldstein during the University of California Northridge's first annual pornography conference. The conversation began with Bruce David of Larry Flynt Publications urging Ford to explain his theory on why so many Jews are involved in pornography, which prompted Goldstein to opine that Jews were in pornography because 'Christ sucks.' After that opening gambit, the conversation got progressively more theological, at least in the Goldstein mode. In response to Ford's question, 'Do you believe in God?' Goldstein answered, 'I believe in me. I'm God. Fuck God. God is your need to believe in some super being. I am the super being. I am your God, admit it. We're random. We're the flea on the ass of the dog.'

The interview continued in that vein:

Luke: 'What does being Jewish mean to you?'

Al: 'It doesn't mean shit. It means that I'm called a kike. Rose is more of a Jew than I am. She speaks Hebrew.'

Goldstein here is referring to his companion, who, unlike Goldstein was raised a religious Jew. At this point, Ford turns to Rose and asks her the same question he just asked Goldstein.

'What does being Jewish mean to you?'

Rose: 'I feel like I am part of a worldwide spiritual community.'

Al: 'Jews and blacks are together. Us kikes and coons ... Like a chocolate mouse [sic].'

Luke: 'What attracts you to Al?'

Rose hesitates, giving Goldstein his opening.

Al: 'It's my big Jewish dick. My circumcision.'

Rose ended the conversation by changing the subject.

'Who do you write for?' she asked Ford.

It's a long stretch to get from the Torah to pornography, and the only way to understand how some people can see some compatibility between being Jewish and a porn star is to understand the historical genesis of their group, which is to say, the historical genesis of the secular, revolutionary Jew. Ever since the Enlightenment, but certainly since Marx, a certain group of Jews have defined being Jewish as being revolutionary. The terms of the revolution have changed over the years, but the revolutionary identity of this group of people has remained constant. Being Jewish, to this group, means being a revolutionary. Revolution is the fulfillment of the biblical promise of deliverance from bondage for people who have given up on waiting for the Messiah. Like David Horowitz, Midge Decter, Irving Kristol, and many other commentators, Rabbi Dresner noticed that the Enlightenment had a powerful effect on Europe's Jews, who were incapable of abandoning the paradigms they learned from the Bible. Instead they secularized them when the Revolutionary Spirit in the form of Napoleon came and knocked down the walls of the ghetto. World Jewry, 80 percent of whom lived in Poland in 1791 when the French Revolution emancipated the Jews, split in two when the Enlightenment came to the shtetl. The result of that intellectual fission can be likened to the splitting of the atom, with the release of an equivalent amount of energy and destruction.

As a result of the Enlightenment, the Jewish community was split into Halachic and Maskilic Jews. The Halachic or ethnic or religious Jews may have been aggressively anti-Christian, but they defined themselves in terms of religious observance and traditions, and they lived in ethnic communities, and their animus was confined within those bounds. Once the Maskilic or secular Enlightenment Jews had given up the Torah as normative, their animus toward Christianity did not cease. They were now able to act on that animus unencumbered by moral considerations. They were also especially vulnerable to Messianic, revolutionary ideologies like communism and sexual liberation. Liberated from the Law, the Revolutionary Jew now had no scruples about things like mass murder or using pornography as an instrument of pan-cultural moral subversion. Everything was permitted as long as it brought about the universal community in which nationhood and ethnicity wither away to be replaced by universal brotherhood and some form of heaven on earth. Because it has abandoned its religious roots, this group tends in practice to define itself in a purely negative terms, i.e. as not Christian, as Alan Dershowitz does in his book *The Vanishing American Jew*. According to this view, Sigmund Freud, an atheist who thought that Moses was an Egyptian, is a Jew; whereas Edith Stein, born of a Jewish mother, intent on worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was not because she became a Christian.

Since the fall of communism, pornography, by way of the theories of sexual revolution articulated by Wilhelm Reich, is the remaining form of revolutionary hope for the latter group of Jews. When Luke Ford received a letter from a German Turkish girl who wanted to come to Hollywood to become a porn star, he shared it with his website readers, one of whom advised him 'not to put her in gangbang scenes as soon as she steps off the plane at LAX.' This does not mean that he advises her to stay home and not become involved in pornography, only that Ford should introduce her to the porn scene gradually. He feels this way for basically religious reasons because he sees putting her in porn films as an example of 'tikkun olam' (healing the world).

Tikkun

Whether the term is intended as ironic or not, the fact that it cropped up in the conversation at all is what motivated Ford to look into the connection between Jews and pornography in the first place. If Ford were more knowledgeable about Jewish history in general and the story of Shabbetai Zevi in particular, he might have understood that the connection between pornography and 'tikkun olam' is not as far-fetched as it seems on first reading. In a paper presented at a conference sponsored by The Institute on East Central Europe and The Center for Israel and Jewish Studies at Columbia University in 1983, Jacob Allerhand claims that 'according to Sabbatian teachings,' Sabbatai Zevi's drunken orgies, 'represented erotic mysteries that were supposed to make a way through the 'gate of lechery' into the hall of eternity.' In other words, those Jews who were influenced by the Kabbalah - Jews like Nathan of Gaza and his protege Shabbetai Zevi - could posit 'a connection between the Original Sin, with the origin of shame, and the tikkun (repair of the blemish) as the elimination of shame under the new messianic order.'

Pornography, in other words, is the latest form of revolutionary hope for anti-Zionist, non-neoconservative Jews. The neoconservatives, more like Trotsky than Wilhelm Reich, have invested their hope in the American empire. A large chunk of recent history has been shaped, in Rabbi Dresner's words, by 'mesmerized Jews' who made modernity their project with a vengeance:

Caged within ghetto bars for centuries, the Jews emerged into the freedom of Western society, where they drank in its culture, tasted its pleasure and enjoyed its power. They demanded citizenship and were so eager to be accepted by the majority that they often offered themselves, sacrificed their history, faith and way of life, their 'identity,' in order that the stigma of their difference might be obliterated. (p. 234).

Dresner, like Nathan Glazer, sees the Enlightenment, as encountered by Jews emigrating to America, as precipitating a conflict between faith and reason which has yet to be resolved:

In fashioning modern man's society, where the idols of politics, culture, and impulse are worshipped, Jews have played a major role. That is so, in part, because in the world's largest Jewish community of Eastern Europe, the Middle Ages did not gradually give way, as in the West, to the influences of the Enlightenment's gifts of science and reason. For most of East European Jewry, the Middle Ages extended down to the nineteenth century and even beyond. Many of the grandparents of present-day American Jews emerged overnight, it seemed from benighted, poverty-stricken villages, little touched by the secular worlds of culture, into the bright lights of modernity with its abundance of new knowledge and undreamt-of opportunity. It should come as no surprise then, that Jews, mesmerized as they must have been by what they saw and read and heard, should have been among the chief advocates of modernity . . . (p. 324).

Stephen Steinlight, in a study he did on immigration he did for the American Jewish Committee, indicates that Jewish political power, following hard on the heels of disastrous Jewish demographics, is on the wane. Perhaps this explains the desperation behind Goldhagen's attack on Pius XII. What's needed at this point is not more libel, not more anti-Christian animus, but more accountability. If, as Steinlight says, 'Television is the Jewish industry par excellence,' then can we hold the Jews accountable for its current parlous state? For its prurience? For its constant warmongering?

The corrosive effects of Sabbetai Zevi's ecstatic sexual messianism are with us today in the porn industry and in Wilhelm Reich's philosophy of control through sexual demoralization. They are still being promoted by Jews as a form of political control and as a way of weakening the power of the non-Jewish majority, as their takeover of Palestinian TV stations and subsequent porn broadcasts during their latest incursion into the West Bank showed.

If television is 'the Jewish industry par excellence,' are the Jews who control television responsible for its content and the effect of that content on the moral and social order? It's long since past time when someone asked those questions. It's now time that someone answered them.CW

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■ [Back to Jewish Catholic Relations](#)

■ [Back to For Catholics](#)

■ [Index](#)